Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 39, 40, 50, 51, 53, 54 and 57 without prejudice. Please amend the remaining claims and add new claims 58-64 as shown below in the Listing of Claims.

Listing of Claims

1-37. (Cancelled)

38. (Currently amended) A process for producing ~~an L-amino acid selected from the group consisting of: L-asparagine; L-serine; L-glutamate; L-glycine; L-homoserine; L-alanine; L-cysteine; L-valine; L-methionine; L-isoleucine; L-leucine;~~ L-threonine[[;]] ~~L-tyrosine; L-phenylalanine; L-histidine; L-lysine; L-tryptophan; and L-arginine~~ comprising:

a) culturing an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said ~~L-amino acid;~~ L-threonine; and

b) isolating said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine as a product;

wherein the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 and has undergone a modification by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of: deletion of all or part of the *yjgF* open reading frame; insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the *yjgF* open reading frame; and transitional or transversional mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *yjgF* open reading frame, wherein said modification results in an increased production of ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine by said enterobacterium relative to the amount of ~~amino acid~~ L-threonine produced in said enterobacterium prior to said mutagenesis; and

wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.

39-40. (Cancelled)

41. (Previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein said enterobacterium is of the species *Escherichia coli*.

42. (Previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein the expression of the *yjgF* open reading frame has been eliminated by the deletion of part of the *yjgF* open reading frame.

43. (Currently amended) The process of claim 38, wherein said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine is isolated from said enterobacterium.

44. (Currently amended) The process of claim 38, wherein said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine is isolated from said medium.

45. (Previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein culturing is performed using a batch process.

46. (Previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein culturing is performed using a fed batch process.

47. (Previously presented) The process of claim 38, wherein culturing is performed using a repeated fed batch process.

48. (Currently amended) A process for producing ~~an L-amino acid~~ L-threonine, comprising:

a) culturing an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine; and

b) either recovering said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine and determining the amount of said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine recovered or isolating said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine as a product;

wherein the expression of the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has been eliminated by deletion of all of the *yjgF* open reading frame; and

wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.

49. (Previously presented) The process of claim 48, wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

50-51. (Cancelled)

52. (Currently amended) The process of claim 48, wherein:

a) said *yjgF* open reading frame has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1; and

~~b) said L-amino acid is L-threonine; and~~

~~c)~~ b) said enterobacterium is of the species *E. coli*.

53-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Currently amended) A process for producing ~~an L-amino acid~~ L-threonine comprising:

a) fermenting an enterobacterium of the genus *Escherichia* in a medium for a time and under conditions suitable for producing said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine; and

b) recovering said ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine and determining the amount of said L-threonine recovered;

wherein the *yjgF* open reading frame of said enterobacterium has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 and has undergone a modification by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of: deletion of all or part of the *yjgF* open reading frame; insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the *yjgF* open reading frame; and transitional or transversional mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *yjgF* open reading frame, wherein said modification results in an increased production of ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine by said enterobacterium relative to the amount of ~~amino acid~~ L-threonine produced in said enterobacterium prior to said mutagenesis; and

wherein said *yjgF* open reading frame encodes the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2.

56. (Currently amended) The process of claim 55, wherein constituents of the fermentation broth and/or the biomass in its entirety or portions thereof remain with the recovered ~~L-amino acid~~ L-threonine of step b).

57. (Cancelled)

58. (New) The process of claim 55, wherein said enterobacterium is of the species *E. coli*

59. (New) The process of claim 55, wherein fermentation is performed using a batch process.

60. (New) The process of claim 55, wherein fermentation is performed using a fed batch process.

61. (New) The process of claim 55, wherein fermentation is performed using a repeated fed batch process.

62. (New) The process of claim 48, wherein culturing is performed using a batch process.

63. (New) The process of claim 48, wherein culturing is performed using a fed batch process.

64. (New) The process of claim 48, wherein culturing is performed using a repeated fed batch process.